

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA IMMEDIATE

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E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: OVIP (SECRETARY ROGERS)

SUBJECT: OPERATIONS CENTER SUMMARY OF SENATE WATERGATE

COMMITTEE HEARINGS: MORNING SESSION, MAY 22, 1973

1. THE SENATE WATERGATE COMMITTEE RESUMED ITS QUESTIONING OF JAMES MCCORD AT 1000 EDT MAY 22. (THE OPERATIONS CENTER WILL SUMMARIZE SECOND SESSION SCHEDULED FOR 1400 EDT WHEN COMPLETED.)

2. MCCORD READ SEVERAL LONG MEMORANDA IN WHICH HE DESCRIBED EFFORTS BY HIS LAWYER TO GET HIM TO BLAME THE CIA FOR THE WATERGATE BREAK- IN. HE STATED HIS OPINION THAT FORMER CIA DIRECTOR HELMS WAS REMOVED FROM HIS JOB EITHER BECAUSE HE WOULD NOT GO ALONG WITH THE PLOT TO BLAME THE CIA OR TO MAKE IT LOOK LATER LIKE THE ACTION HAD BEEN A PUNATIVE ONE, IN PREPARATION FOR LAYING THE BLAME ON THE CIA. HE SAID HIS LAWYER INDICATED TO HIM THAT NEW CIA DIRECTOR JAMES SCHLESINGER WOULD GO ALONG WITH THE PLAN AND WOULD FALSIFY MCCORD' S PERSONNEL FILE TO SHOW THAT HE HAD BEEN BROUGHT BACK FROM RETIREMENT TO WORK ON THE JOB. MCCORD SAID THAT HE RESISTED THESE ATTEMPTS AND REFUSED TO USE THIS LINE AS PART OF HIS DEFENSE. HE CRITICIZED THE WHITE HOUSE FOR ITS " RUTHLESS" ATTEMPT TO BLAME THE CIA, ALTHOUGH UNDER CLOSE

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QUESTIONING HE COULD NOT DIRECTLY TIE IN ANYONE IN THE WHITE HOUSE WITH SUCH ATTEMPTS.

3. MCCORD ALSO REVIEWED HIS REASONS FOR AGREEING TO UNDERTAKE THE WATERGATE OPERATION. AS THE RESPONSIBLE SECURITY OFFICIAL AT THE COMMITTEE TO REELECT THE PRESIDENT, HE WAS CONCERNED ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF VIOLENCE, ESPECIALLY AT THE CONVENTION IN MIAMI. HE HAD HEARD THAT SOME MILITANT ELEMENTS MIGHT BE USING THE DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL HEAD-QUARTER'S PHONE FACILITIES. HE FIGURED THAT THE OPERATION MIGHT GIVE HIM INFORMATION WHICH WOULD ENABLE HIM TO PRO-ALSO SAID THAT HE UNDERTOOK THE OPERATION BECAUSE HE THOUGHT IT HAD THE APPROVAL OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL AND PRESIDENTIAL COUNSEL JOHN DEAN.

4. REGARDING CALLS MADE TO FOREIGN EMBASSIES, NAMELY THOSE OF CHILE AND ISRAEL, MCCORD SAID HE MADE THESE IN SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER, 1972, IN AN ATTEMPT TO FORCE THE GOVERNMENT TO REVEAL THAT IT HAD BEEN TAPPING HIS TELEPHONE. SUB-

SEQUENTLY, THE GOVERNMENT TOLD THE COURT IT HAD NO RECORDS OF HIS CONVERSATIONS AND THAT MCCORD'S PHONE HAD NOT BEEN TAPPED. HE GAVE NO TESTIMONY THAT THE PHONES OF EITHER EMBASSY HAD BEEN BUGGED.

5. IN CONNECTION WITH HIS TESTIMONY THAT HE WAS OFFERED EXECUTIVE CLEMENCY, MCCORD SAID THAT HE HAD BEEN CONTACTED BY BOTH MR. AND MRS. HUNT, WHO HAD BEEN IN CONTACT WITH TWO COMMITTEE- TO- REELECT- THE- PRESIDENT LAWYERS, KENNETH PARKINSON AND PAUL O' BRIEN.

6. MCCORD ALSO MENTIONED HOWARD HUGHES IN HIS TESTIMONY IN CONNECTION WITH AN ATTEMPT BY GORDON LIDDY TO BREAK INTO THE OFFICE OF A NEWSPAPER EDITOR IN LAS VEGAS. HUGHES WAS TO HAVE PROVIDED THE GETAWAY PLANE TO FLY THE PERSONS INVOLVED TO A CENTRAL AMERICAN COUNTRY FOLLOWING THE BREAK- IN. HE DID NOT MENTION IF THIS OPERATION WAS ACTUALLY CARRIED OUT. PORTER

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